

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 MCE-00 ACDA-12 IO-14 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EB-08 OMB-01 COME-00
TRSE-00 /111 W
-----043674 301855Z /41

R 281507Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4847
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY OSLO
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 3865

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MILL, EEWT, SW, CH
SUBJ: SWEDISH ARMS FOR CHINA: TASS BLASTS SWEDISH SUPREME
MILITARY COMMANDER

REF: (A) STOCKHOLM 3717, (B) PEKING 3082 (NOTAL)

1. SPECULATION ON THE POSSIBLE SALE OF SWEDISH ARMS TO PRC
CONTINES TO APPEAR IN SWEDISH MEDIA, MOST RECENTLY ON SEP-
TEMBER 28 WITH THE PUBLICATION OF A TASS COMMENTARY BLASTING
SWEDISH SUPREME MILITARY COMMANDER GENERAL STIG SYNNERGREN.
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2. SYNNERGREN, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH GOTEBOG'S POSTEN ON
SEPTEMBER 24, EXPLAINED THAT THERE WERE THREE EXPLICIT FACTORS
TO BE CONSIDERED IN ANY SALE OF SWEDISH ARMS TO CHINA: (A) EXPORT
REGULATIONS. SYNNERGREN SAID THAT CHINA FULFILLS ALL THE
CONDITIONS SPECIFIED IN THESE REGULATIONS; (B) FREEDON OF
SWEDISH FIRMS TO NEGOTIATE WITH CHINA. SYNNERGREN EXPLAINED

THAT NOTHING PROHIBITS SWEDISH ARMS EXPORTERS FROM CONDUCTING NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE CHINESE, BUT THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT MAINTAINS THE RIGHT TO APPROVE ACTUAL EXPORTS; (C) THE POLITICAL ISSUE. SYNNERGREN SAID THE FOLLOWING: "CONSIDERATION HERE EMBRACES A SUITABLE APPRAISAL. IT IS THIS LATTER ASPECT WHICH NOW ARISES, I.E., WHAT WILL THE RUSSIANS SAY IF THE SWEDES SELL ARMS TO CHINA? IN ANSWER TO THAT I CAN SAY ONLY THAT FROM HER OWN REFERENCE POINT, I.E., HER NEUTRALITY POLICY, SWEDEN CAN BE PREPARED TO SELL IN ALL DIRECTIONS. WE SELL TO THE WEST, WE SELL TO THE SOUTH, WE SELL EASTWARD TO THE FINNS. IF THE RUSSIANS WANTED TO BUY FROM US WE MIGHT SELL TO THEM TOO. WHY THEN SHOULD WE REFUSE TO SELL TO THE CHINESE. ALL THE PREREQUISITES ARE THERE BUT THAT IS NOT THE SAME AS MY SAYING WE SHOULD SELL THEM THE VIGGEN. AFTER ALL, WE DON'T WANT ANOTHER NO FROM THE AMERICANS."

3. UNDER THE TITLE "GENERAL SYNNERGREN'S PECULIAR ATTITUDE", TASS ON SEPTEMBER 26 SAID THAT WHILE THE QUESTION OF SWEDISH TRADING PARTNERS IS AN INTERNAL SWEDISH MATTER, INTERNATIONAL OPINION CANNOT BE INDIFFERENT, WHEN IT COMES TO THE ARMS TRADE, TO THE QUESTION OF WHO BUYS WHAT FROM WHOM AND FOR WHAT PURPOSE. "AS FAR AS PEKING, WHOSE EMISSARIES ARE TRAVELLING AROUND WESTERN EUROPE IN A HUNT FOR WEAPONS, IS CONCERNED, ITS AIMS ARE WELL-KNOWN: THE PEKING LEADERSHIP OPENLY SAYS OT IS AGAINST DETENTE AND FOR AN ESCALLATED ARMS RACE, AND THAT IT CONSIDERS A WORLD WAR INEVITABLE AND EVEN DESIRABLE". TASS CONTINUED:
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"IS IT NOT STRANGE THAT THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN NEUTRAL SWEDEN DISREGARDS THIS ASPECT?" SYNNERGREN, WHO WILL RETIRE FROM THE MILITARY SERVICE ON OCTOBER 1, THUS FAR IS "UNAVAIL-ABLE" FOR COMMENT ON THE TASS CRITICISM. AT THE DEFENSE STAFF IN STOCKHOLM, HOWEVER, A SPOKESMAN SAID TASS HAS BASED ITS CRITICISM ON "A GROSSLY SIMPLIFIED ARGUMENT."

4. COMMENT: SYNNERGREN'S EXPLANATION, OF COURSE, IS CORRECT. CHINA QUALIFIES UNDER SWEDISH EXPORT REGULATIONS AS A POTENTIAL RECIPIENT OF SWEDISH ARMS. WHEN POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS ARE ADDED, HOWEVER, ACTUAL POSSIBILITIES BECOME MORE NARROW. MFA SOURCES CONTINUE TO ASSERT THAT SWEDEN WILL NOT BE THE FIRST WESTERN COUNTRY TO PROVIDE CHINA WITH SIGNIFICANT ARMS. GOS CONCERN OVER THE PROBABLY SOVIET REACTION TO SUCH SALES IS A REAL ONE, AND WAS CERTAINLY NOT DILUTED BY THE TASS CRITICISM OF THE OUTGOING SYNNERGREN.

5. FOR USLO PEKING: EMBASSY GREATLY APPRECIATES INFORMATION CONTAINED REF B. WITH REGARD TO THE REFERENCE TO THE RBS-70 SYSTEM MENTIONED THEREIN, WE WOULD POINT OUT THAT CHINESE INTEREST IN THIS WEAPON HAS APPEARED IN THE PRESS AND WAS REPORTED IN PARA 4, REF A.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, PRESS COMMENTS, MILITARY SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STOCKH03865
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780400-0389
Format: TEL
From: STOCKHOLM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978099/aaaaahdb.tel
Line Count: 117
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e4adde55-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STOCKHOLM 3717, 78 PEKING 3082
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1507524
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWEDISH ARMS FOR CHINA: TASS BLASTS SWEDISH SUPREME MILITARY COMMANDER
TAGS: PEPR, MILI, EEWT, SW, CH, UR, TASS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e4adde55-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014